

Remarks

The Applicants respectfully request consideration of the subject application upon entry of this Third Preliminary Amendment.

Upon entry of this third preliminary amendment, the present application will have claims 1-67 pending and under consideration. The Applicants hereby notify the Examiner that claims 24-31 have been copied from U.S. Patent Application Number 10/335,259, filed December 31, 2002, as published in U.S. Publication Number 2003/0199789 A1 on October 23, 2003 (hereinafter referred to as the “‘789 Publication”). Claims 24-31 in the present application respectively correspond to claims 34, 51, and 54-57 from the ‘789 publication. It should be noted that claims 24-31 have been filed within one (1) year of the publication date of the ‘789 Publication, and as a result, the requirements of 35 U.S.C. §135(b)(2) have been satisfied.

The Applicants hereby notify the Examiner that claims 32-44 have been copied from U.S. Patent Application Number 10/335,182, filed December 31, 2002, as published in U.S. Publication Number 2003/0199790 A1 on October 23, 2003 (hereinafter referred to as the “‘790 Publication”). Claims 32-44 in the present application respectively correspond to claims 1, 52-54, 57, 58, 61, 68, 72, and 175 from the ‘790 publication. It should be noted claims 121-123, 126, 127, 130, and 137 in the ‘790 publication are duplicates of claims 52-54, 57, 58, 61, and 68 in the ‘790 publication, which have been already copied, and therefore, were not copied again to avoid a statutory double patenting rejection. It should also be noted that claims 32-44 have been filed within one (1) year of the publication date of the ‘790 Publication, and as a result, the requirements of 35 U.S.C. §135(b)(2) have been satisfied.

The Applicants hereby notify the Examiner that claims 45-50 have been copied from U.S. Patent Application Number 10/335,215, filed December 31, 2002, as published in U.S.

Publication Number 2003/0199791 A1 on October 23, 2003 (hereinafter referred to as the “‘791 Publication”). Claims 45-50 in the present application respectively correspond to claims 40, 41, 50, 51, 52, and 53 from the ‘791 publication. It should be noted that claims 45-50 have been filed within one (1) year of the publication date of the ‘791 Publication, and as a result, the requirements of 35 U.S.C. §135(b)(2) have been satisfied.

The Applicants hereby notify the Examiner that claims 51-56 have been copied from U.S. Patent Application Number 10/335,099, filed December 31, 2002, as published in U.S. Publication Number 2003/0199898 A1 on October 23, 2003 (hereinafter referred to as the “‘898 Publication”). Claims 51-56 in the present application respectively correspond to claims 38, 39, 46-49 from the ‘898 publication. It should be noted that claims 51-56 have been filed within one (1) year of the publication date of the ‘898 Publication, and as a result, the requirements of 35 U.S.C. §135(b)(2) have been satisfied.

The Applicants hereby notify the Examiner that claim 57 has been copied from U.S. Patent Application Number 10/335,142, filed December 31, 2002, as published in U.S. Publication Number 2003/0199899 A1 on October 23, 2003 (hereinafter referred to as the “‘899 Publication”). Claim 57 in the present application respectively corresponds to claim 95 from the ‘899 publication. It should be noted that claim 57 has been filed within one (1) year of the publication date of the ‘899 Publication, and as a result, the requirements of 35 U.S.C. §135(b)(2) have been satisfied.

The Applicants hereby notify the Examiner that claims 58 and 59 have been copied from U.S. Patent Application Number 10/335,212, filed December 31, 2002, as published in U.S. Publication Number 2003/0199902 A1 on October 23, 2003 (hereinafter referred to as the “‘902 Publication”). Claims 58 and 59 in the present application respectively correspond to claims 145

and 147 from the ‘902 publication. It should be noted that claims 58 and 59 have been filed within one (1) year of the publication date of the ‘902 Publication, and as a result, the requirements of 35 U.S.C. §135(b)(2) have been satisfied.

The Applicants hereby notify the Examiner that claims 60-65 have been copied from U.S. Patent Application Number 10/335,217, filed December 31, 2002, as published in U.S. Publication Number 2003/0199903 A1 on October 23, 2003 (hereinafter referred to as the “‘903 Publication”). Claims 60-65 in the present application respectively correspond to claims 25, 28, 29, 30, 31 and 32 from the ‘903 publication. It should be noted that claims 60-65 have been filed within one (1) year of the publication date of the ‘903 Publication, and as a result, the requirements of 35 U.S.C. §135(b)(2) have been satisfied.

The Applicants hereby notify the Examiner that claims 66 and 67 have been copied from U.S. Patent Application Number 10/335,258, filed December 31, 2002, as published in U.S. Publication Number 2003/0199911 A1 on October 23, 2003 (hereinafter referred to as the “‘911 Publication”). Claims 66 and 67 in the present application respectively correspond to claims 82 and 86 from the ‘911 publication. It should be noted that claims 66 and 67 have been filed within one (1) year of the publication date of the ‘911 Publication, and as a result, the requirements of 35 U.S.C. §135(b)(2) have been satisfied.

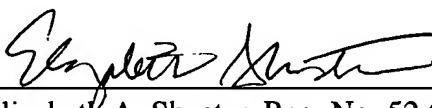
The Applicants wish to note that the present application claims priority to at least May 17, 1996, which is more than one year earlier than the December 31, 2002 filing date of the ‘789, ‘790, ‘791, ‘898, ‘899, ‘902, ‘903, and ‘911 Publications. In particular, the present application is a continuation of Application Serial No. 09/887,574 filed June 21, 2001, which is a continuation of Application Serial No. 09/552,243 filed April 19, 2000, now U.S. Patent No. 6,352,514, which is a continuation of Application Serial No. 09/298,386 filed April 23, 1999, now U.S. Patent No.

6,099,484, which is a continuation of Application Serial No. 08/858,042 filed May 16, 1997, now U.S. Patent No. 5,951,492, which claims benefit of provisional Application Serial Nos. 60/017,133 filed May 17, 1996; 60/019,918 filed June 14, 1996; 60/023,658 filed August 1, 1996; 60/025,340 filed September 3, 1996; 60/064,856 filed September 17, 1996; 60/092,121 filed September 16, 1996 and 60/044,406 filed October 8, 1996. It also should be noted that the U.S. Patent No. 5,951,492 issued on September 14, 1999, which is more than one year prior to the filing date of the '789, '790, '791, '898, '899, '902, '903, and '911 Publications.

As should be appreciated, after reviewing the present application, as well as its parent and provisional applications, the claims copied into this case are supported by the application as originally filed. For example, FIGS. 1-8 along with pages 5-10 and 13-19 illustrate and describe a number of the features recited in the above-copied claims. Moreover, the present application incorporates by reference a number references, which provide additional support. It should be understood that these examples are non-limiting in nature, and that support for the copied claims is provided at other parts of the present application.

In view of this Third Preliminary Amendment, consideration of the present application, as amended, is respectfully requested. If after reviewing this amendment the Examiner feels that any issues remain which must be resolved, the Examiner is invited to contact the applicants' undersigned representative by telephone to resolve such issues.

Respectfully Submitted,

By 
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